

V. REMARKS

In the final Office Action mailed May 5, 2006, claims 1-8 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Ozaki et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0031658). However, claims 7 and 8 have been canceled in the Amendment that was filed on February 14, 2006. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-6 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Ozaki. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Ozaki discloses a pattern display device that includes a pattern display and a front side display. The pattern display unit has a display portion for displaying a plurality of different first patterns. The pattern display unit is capable of performing a stationary display and a varying display. The front side display unit is disposed in front of the pattern display unit and is capable of displaying a plurality of different second patterns overlapping with the plurality of first patterns. The front side display unit is transparent except for the plurality of second patterns.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a variable display device for variably displaying designs in a plurality of rows and emitting light, a front display device disposed in front of the variable display device, a memory and an image controller. Claim 1 recites that the front display device includes a liquid crystal display panel, a light guiding plate disposed between the liquid crystal display panel and the variable display device and has a plurality of transparent areas formed therethrough corresponding to respective ones of the plurality of rows, a light source disposed adjacent a peripheral surface of the light guiding plate and a reflection plate disposed between the variable display device and the light guiding plate for reflecting a light emitted from the light source on the light guiding plate to the liquid crystal display panel. Claim 1 further recites that the memory is operative for storing a selection of at least image data and the image controller is operably connected to the memory and the liquid crystal display panel. Additionally, claim 1 recites that light from the light source is guided via the light guiding plate to the liquid crystal display panel and illuminates a partial surface area of the liquid crystal display panel

while the light emitted from the variable display device illuminates a remaining surface area of the liquid crystal display panel through respective ones of the plurality of transparent areas of the light guiding plate. Furthermore, claim 1 recites that the image controller is operative to cause a selected one of the image data from the memory to be displayed on the liquid crystal display panel while simultaneously the variable display device variably displays designs in the plurality of rows through the plurality of transparent areas thereby ensuring visibility of the variably displayed designs while the selected one of the image data is displayed on the liquid crystal display panel.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is improper because the applied art fails to teach each element of claim 1 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art fails to teach that an image controller is operative to cause a selected one of image data from a memory to be displayed on a liquid crystal display panel while simultaneously the variable display device variably displays designs in a plurality of rows through a plurality of transparent areas thereby ensuring visibility of the variably displayed designs while the selected one of the image data is displayed on the liquid crystal display panel. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

Claim 4, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a variable display device that variably displays designs in a plurality of rows and emits light, a front display device, a memory and an image controller. Claim 4 recites that the front display device is disposed in front of the variable display device and includes a transparent liquid crystal display panel, a light guiding plate disposed between the liquid crystal display panel and the variable display device and having a plurality of openings formed therethrough corresponding to respective ones of the plurality of rows, a light source disposed adjacent a peripheral surface of the light guiding plate and a reflection plate disposed between the variable display device and the light guiding plate for reflecting a light emitted from the light source on the light guiding plate to the liquid crystal display panel. Additionally, claim 1 recites that the memory is operative for

storing a selection of at least image data and the image controller is operably connected to the memory and the liquid crystal display panel. Claim 4 further recites that light from the light source is guided via the light guiding plate to the liquid crystal display panel and illuminates a partial surface area of the liquid crystal display panel while the light emitted from the variable display device illuminates a remaining surface area of the liquid crystal display panel through respective ones of the plurality of openings of the light guiding plate.

Additionally, claim 4 recites that the image controller is operative to cause a selected one of the image data from the memory to be displayed on the liquid crystal display panel while simultaneously the variable display device variably displays designs in the plurality of rows through the plurality of transparent areas thereby ensuring visibility of the variably displayed designs while the selected one of the image data is displayed on the liquid crystal display panel.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is improper because the applied art fails to teach each element of claim 4 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art fails to teach that an image controller is operative to cause a selected one of image data from a memory to be displayed on a liquid crystal display panel while simultaneously the variable display device variably displays designs in a plurality of rows through a plurality of transparent areas thereby ensuring visibility of the variably displayed designs while the selected one of the image data is displayed on the liquid crystal display panel. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Claims 5, 6 and 11 depend from claim 4 and include all of the features of claim 4. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 4 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Ozaki and Biferno (U.S. Patent No. 4,562,433) in view of Suzuki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,745,199). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Biferno discloses a display system that is constructed in such a manner that, upon failure of the primary display fabricated from a liquid crystal display, the primary display becomes transparent upon its failure and a backup display located behind the primary display becomes visible to a user.

Suzuki teaches a liquid crystal display device. The Examiner cites this reference to show a liquid crystal display with an antistatic treatment.

Claim 9 depends from claim 4 and includes all of the features of claim 4. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claim 9 is allowable at least for the reason claim 4 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.


Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal
 Request for Continued Examination
 Petition for Extension of Time (one month)

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